

Testimony
Senate Bill 2151
Senate Education Committee
Senator Tim Flakoll, Chairman
January 13, 2015

Chairman Flakoll, members of the Senate Education Committee, I am Jennifer Barry, the Early Childhood Services Administrator with the Department of Human Services. I am here today in support of Senate Bill 2151.

This bill provides direction for districts to form a coalition of early childhood service providers. These coalitions may encourage partnerships between public and private early childhood programs and may serve as a resource to all early childhood service providers, including child care providers.

The grant funding described in this bill is not specific to one type of early childhood service provider and would be accessible to programs that are eligible for approval under North Dakota Century Code section 15.1-37-01, provided that the program is a participating member of the coalition. For private child care and preschool providers who are eligible for approval, this funding would enhance the quality of early childhood education services provided to pre-kindergarten aged children and could potentially be used to address the wage disparity between teachers with equal qualifications who work in private child care and preschool programs and those who work in public pre-kindergarten programs.

For licensed child care and private preschool providers who do meet the approval requirements, this bill offers one more resource for enhancing

the quality of services offered and for retaining qualified providers and staff.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.